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You
Should
Ask...

Some Answers
To Some Questions
That Some People Ask

... as a visit inside
the Peoples Republic of
China is recalled.

October 8 - 25, 1981

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Why did you go to China?

For many reasons.

It is a far away land, a different culture, an ancient civilization. It is a large country—the third in size after the U.S.S.R. and Canada. It is the most populous country with an estimated one billion people. It is a country making a desperate attempt to move from the bicycle age to the automotive by the end of this century. It is a communist nation desirous of maintaining our friendship. It is a government seeking to conserve the best of what has happened since 1949 and at the same time endeavoring to free itself from much they deem of questionable value. These are a few reasons. But none of them represents the primary reason.

What was the primary reason for your wanting to travel in the Peoples Republic of China?

The primary reason was two-fold: to interact with the Chinese people and to assess first hand the present situation in which Christians find themselves.

What was your mode of travel?

By airplane, by Hovercraft, by train, by bus, by boat, by foot.

When did you go and for how long?

We left October 8, 1981 and returned eighteen days later, October 25.

What cities did you visit?

Hong Kong, Guangzhou (Canton), Guilin, Shanghai, Suzhou, Wuxi, Nanjing and Beijing (Peking).

How many were in your group and were they compatible?

There were twenty of us. Winifred and I have never traveled with a finer group of people.

Is there variety of climate and landscape in a land as enormous as China?

In the northeast there are great forests and plains. In wintertime the temperature can drop to —40 degrees. Some 2000 miles to the south the peasant grows tropical fruits. In the west there are deserts, grasslands, high mountains. In the east are ancient and large cities, flourishing farm areas (communes) and many industrial areas.

*How many provinces are there in
The Peoples Republic of China?*

There are 26 and I think at least 3 autonomous regions.
Each has its own traditions and dialects.

*What is meant by the term Central
Kingdom?*

Presumably it comes from the Chinese *Zhong Guo*. Despite the differences that characterize the almost one billion people, they believe themselves to belong to something far greater than their individual province. Then, too, it can be said that during Europe's Dark Ages when the Chinese people maintained an advanced state of the arts, of literature, of politics, of science, their culture was such that they thought it to be so superior that they naturally considered themselves the world's central kingdom while outside their imperial borders were only barbaric people.

*Is it true that the Chinese civiliza-
tion is the oldest in the world?*

Chinese civilization is not the oldest in the world, but it is the most continuous.

*What about those excavations near
Peking by anthropological
expeditions?*

Such excavations have unearthed the bones of so-called Peking Man, said to be the ancestor of modern man who was a cave-dweller some half-million years ago.

*Did Chinese civilization exist
before the Christian era?*

It was in an advanced state at least 1,500 years before Christ was born. Codes of law were established. Roads and waterways were common. Cities existed. There were people learned in religion and philosophy.

*Where did China get its moral code,
its respect for authority?*

The name to remember here is Confucius, a very famous scholar and philosopher whose teachings formed the moral code of the Chinese for over 2,000 years. He was born some 500 years before Christ. He is the one who emphasized obedience—sons to the father, subjects to the emperor—the emperor to Heaven.

Who was SHIH HUANG TI?

He was a man of humble origins who became a tyrant and military despot. Yet under him all of China's states were unified. He lived in the 3rd century before Christ. Upon his death at least six rebellions broke out.

What were the more famous dynasties?

Over a 2000-year period there was the rise and fall of more than one famous dynasty—such as the HAN, the T'ang, the Jung and the Ming.

When was there such a thing as the Communist take-over?

It was in 1949 under Mao Zedong.

What are some of the characteristics of the Chinese people?

I believe them to be friendly, respectful of their elders, intelligent, energetic, disciplined, family-oriented, curious.

Does China have a food problem?

With only 14 per cent of its 3½ million square miles cultivatable, with a population almost one billion—China most certainly is hard pressed to produce enough food to feed her people.

Does China have oil, coal?

Yes. Enough for her own needs. She exports coal—perhaps some oil. I am not certain how much, if any, of the latter.

Is there family planning in today's China?

Yes, and especially where propaganda and control are effective. We were told that abortion is required by the state where children are conceived out of wed-lock and that families should be limited to no more than two children. Despite such drastic measures, the population increases by some 12 million a year.

Is it true that 80% of the population work on the land?

Yes, despite the fact that there is a definite trend toward industrialization.

What about the Great Wall?

Intended to be a barrier, constructed more than 2,000 years ago, to keep the barbarians from interfering with the peace of the Central Kingdom, the Wall snakes across the mountains for some 4,000 miles. (3,946.55 miles, if you want to be exact). It took about ten years to build with the forced labor of 300,000 peasants. Originally it was built of mud. During the Ming Dynasty its surface was covered with bricks and stones. It is about 20 feet high. It is the only man-made structure which American astronauts could identify while circling the earth in outer space.

Of some interest to us could be the legend that on many a dark and dreary night the haunting cries of the dead can be heard since in truth the Great Wall is 'the world's longest graveyard'—many of the builders were buried where they fell as they constructed it.

Why is the Yellow River referred to as 'China's Sorrow'?

While the Yellow River, China's second largest waterway, is the home of China's earliest civilization, it is also referred to as 'China's Sorrow' because of the millions who have perished—either by inundation caused by its innumerable floods or by starvation when it dried up and crops failed.

What is loess?

It is strange soil. As the Yellow River again flows southward, it moves through an area known as the loess lands—consisting of more than five hundred thousand square kilometers of fine, light-chocolate colored dusty soil. It lies thick on the hills and the plateaus. Say it again and again—it is strange soil. It is so fine that should a person rub it between his fingers it will disappear into the pores of the skin. But when found as a mass, its perpendicular walls, sometimes more than 100 feet high, will stand sturdily without collapsing.

What about Peking?

It is now spelled BEIJING, and is the capital of the country with the world's greatest number of people. It is an ancient city (some 3,000 years old) with a present-day population of more than 8,000,000 including those in the suburbs and communes. It has an acute housing shortage. There are spacious boulevards and many new buildings under construction to better accommodate the people. It is a centre of learning with many universities. Iron and steel mills have been built and many plants now manufacture machinery, chemicals, textiles, cameras, etc. Like all of

China's cities, it abounds with bicycles. It is almost the same latitude as Philadelphia. Within Peking one soon marvels at the huge square of The Gate of Heavenly Peace, the Great Hall of The People, the Forbidden City.

What about TIEN AN MEN?

It means Gate of Heavenly Peace and is the most famous structure in China, except, of course, for the Great Wall. It was built in the middle of the seventeenth century. It serves as a symbol of old and new China since imperial edicts were read from its lofty balcony and from the same spot in October, 1949, Chairman Mao Zedong proclaimed the Peoples Republic of China.

*Isn't there a square known as
TIAN AN MEN SQUARE?*

Yes. It consists of almost 100 acres, big enough for more than a million people to congregate at one time. It is bounded on one side by the Gate of Heavenly Peace. Chairman Mao's mausoleum is here as is also the Heroes Monument. In 1966 this square was the site of Red Guard rallies when a million and more people enthusiastically waved Mao's little red book of quotations.

*Did you get to the Forbidden City?
What is located there? Why
is it so-named?*

Unlike anything else in the world, tall walls with intermittent towers surround a remarkable complex containing palaces, ceremonial halls and temples. Here was the seat of the emperor, who lived with his empress and an entourage of concubines, eunuchs and carefully chosen officials. It was from within the Forbidden City that imperial decrees were issued, respected and obeyed by a populace that stood in both awe and fear of its ruler. In days gone by access to the areas within the walls of the complex (totaling some 178 acres and whose buildings numbered more than 9,000 rooms) was forbidden to all outside the emperor's court, hence the name Forbidden City. It was originally built by the Ming emperors, using 100,000 artisans and ten times that many laborers. It took fourteen years to complete the construction, from 1406-1420. Money collected as taxes and rents from the almost 700,000 acres of royal estates maintained the place. Difficult as it may be to visualize, during the Ming Dynasty it has been reported that 9,000 ladies-in-waiting along with some 90 to 100 thousand eunuchs served within The Forbidden City.

*What is the Great Hall of
The People?*

In 1959 there were ten very large buildings constructed to mark the tenth anniversary of the Peoples Republic of China. The Great Hall of The People was one of these buildings. It has three main sections: (a) banquet hall to seat some 5,000 people (b) a three-story auditorium that can seat 10,000 people (c) and a series of lounges, each in the style of the 30 provinces.

*What took place in the so-called
Temple of Heaven?*

Several times in the course of the year the emperor, carrying upon himself all the sins of the Chinese people, would prostrate himself in the direction of Heaven. It was his intention that through certain ritualistic performances good harvests would be guaranteed. The temple (built at about the same time as The Forbidden City) is set in the middle of more than 600 acres of park land with pine and cypress trees - some of which are over 500 years old.

What about the Ming Tombs?

There are thirteen of them, built through three centuries - the 14th to the 17th. They are spread over some 40 square kilometers. There is a wall around each tomb, within which are a Soul Tower, a Sacrificial Hall and an Underground Palace. The tombs were begun while the emperors were alive - as an example Wan Li who ruled for 48 years had his tomb begun when he was 22 years old, in the twelfth year of his reign. It took six years to complete.

Did you see the Sacred Way?

Yes. It constitutes an impressive approach to the tombs, some two-thirds of a mile long. It has 18 pairs of stone statues of men and animals all bigger than life. The statues of men are presumably of military personnel and high ranking government officials.

Does Peking have a subway?

Yes. It took four years to build and was completed in 1969. It is 24 kilometers long. A second stage has been added.

Is there Coca Cola in China?

Yes.

*Where did you shop?
What about the prices?
What's available?*

In every major city there is presumably The Friendship Store. By our standards, the prices are very reasonable. Assuming that at some factories, one could get a better price such stores stock clousonne, jade carvings, lacquerware, textiles, Chinese traditional paintings, filigree, wood-block prints, etc., etc.

*What about your hotel
accommodations?*

Some were good. Some were better. We had no choice. All arrangements were handled by the China International Travel Service. In 1978 China began building at least one new hotel each year in every city. China is doing its level best to meet requirements of overseas visitors. In every instance we were provided an ample supply of hot water in thermos bottles, along with boiled water for drinking. The beds were clean. All the hotel personnel we experienced were courteous and helpful.

What about the food?

In our case, this was the poorest of all aspects of our journey. Since we were a group tour, we were served pre-arranged menu, family-style. The supply was ample. The service courteous. Fortunately for some of us, when it came to breakfast, we were given western-style food - toast, juice, coffee, fried eggs.

*Did you have good guides,
interpreters?*

We were given a tour escort in Hong Kong, a native bilingual Chinese, who represented our Travel Agency and accompanied us from the day of our arrival through the day of our departure. Once in the Peoples Republic of China we were met by a Chinese guide who continued with us throughout our entire stay in China until we left Peking. Personable and intelligent she left nothing to be desired. In each city we were also given a local guide and interpreter who performed admirably. Each one of our guides proved himself or herself most conscientious and reliable. Most guides are students of universities or foreign-language institutes. In our particular case we had the good fortune to have the veteran travel agent, the president and general manager of her own firm, as a member of our tour party. This most decidedly was a plus.

Did you do much walking?

Yes. Very much.

What about tipping?

As we understand it, in the Peoples Republic of China it is not expected, not encouraged, not accepted . . . generally speaking

Did you get to Nanking?

What did you think of it?

Nanjing, as they now spell it, was the last city we visited before going to Peking. We thoroughly enjoyed it - - from every angle. The fact that we had excellent hotel accommodations helped. But one must add quickly, the city is beautiful in its own right - - broad tree-lined avenues. Someone has counted at least 240,000 trees! Located on the Yangtze River, it has a population today of some three million. It is another ancient city, built more than 2,400 years ago. In 1912 it became the capital of the Sun-Yat-Sen government for a few months when the capital was moved to Peking. As any student knows, it was intermittently the capital of any number of dynasties from 229 A.D. to 1421. There was a dark day in her not-so-recent history as on December 12, 1937 the Japanese captured this city and massacred 100,000 civilians in what has now been referred to as the Rape of Nanking. The communists took over the city on April 23, 1949 and moved the capital to Peking where it has remained.

Nanjing has between 85-90 peoples communes who occupy some 40,000 acres of land.

*What about the bridge that
'couldn't be built'?*

It was. It is the longest in China and is known as the Nanjing Yangtze River Bridge. It has four lanes for vehicles and on another level, two trains can run side by side. The bridge, the pride of Chinese engineering skill and competence, took eight years to build.

*The travel books mention the
Sun Yat-Sen Mausoleum in Nanjing.*

Did you visit it? Who was he?

Dr. Sun Yat-Sen is recognized as the father of the Chinese Republic. He had tried repeatedly to lead one revolt after another against the Ching dynasty. His first victory came on October 10, 1911. Much was made this year of the 70th anniversary of this event. January 1, 1912 Dr. Sun Yat-Sen was declared provisional president of the Chinese Republic. He died of cancer on March 12, 1925. His mausoleum, in

which he was buried in 1929, is located on the south side of Purple Gold Mountain on an 80,000 square-meter site. So large a tract was selected because his people maintained that it had to be more impressive than those of the emperors he displaced! One climbs, step by step - - all 329 of them - - to reach the mausoleum itself - - some 158 meters above sea level.

Did you visit the 'Venice of China'?

We did indeed. It is named Suzhou (Soochow). It is another ancient city, founded by Ho Lu, King of Wu. He made it his capital in the sixth century B.C. Present day population is 600,000. The communes in and about Suzhou raise silkworms and jasmine for jasmine tea. The city is one of the prettiest in all of China and is crisscrossed by many canals. Many, if not most of the small houses in Suzhou, are of the same design and are white-washed.

When did you travel by Hovercraft?

We traveled for some three hours from Hong Kong to Canton on the Pearl River. Canton is now known as Guangzhou (Kwangchow) and is an urban area with some 3,000,000 people. It goes back some 2,000 years and today enjoys quite a reputation as a trading city. An annual Trade Fair attracts thousands from many parts of the world. Canton is also known as the Chinese city that has sent many immigrants to parts of Southeast Asia, to Canada, to Australia, to the United States, etc. Because of its geographical location which separates it from the center of China, it is natural that Canton should become conducive to an independent or rebellious spirit. Hong Kong is much dependent upon this region for food, electricity, water, etc.

What is pomelo?

It is grapefruit-like, and grows along with very sweet oranges in Guilin.

Where is Guilin?

It is also known as Kweilin and is northwest about an hour and fifteen minutes by air from Canton. It is another old, old city - - going back to about 214 B.C. Today's population is about 350,000. Here one is introduced to the fascinating vertical limestone mountains and the meandering Li and Peach Blossom Rivers. One does not call a visit to Guilin complete without an excursion into the Reed Flute Cave or a leisurely trip on the Li River.

*Did you get to the
'Paris of The Orient'?*

I presume you are referring to Shanghai, and the answer is yes. Bigger than Tokyo, it is the world's largest city with an estimated population of eleven million. Its history goes back to the Middle Ages when it was a small fishing village. Thanks to its strategic location near the mouth of the Yangtze River, it has become an open door for China to the world - an important port and trading centre. Its history encompasses the totality of life: prosperity and poverty, world-wide commerce, war and politics, finance and industry, religion, arts and literature. Interestingly enough in the 1930's there were at least 13 different foreign settlements established in Shanghai, each enjoyed so-called 'extra-territorial status' and was in turn exempt from Chinese law. The dominating influence was British. One needs to recall, when speaking of Shanghai, that it was in one of the city's unoccupied girls' schools that the Communist Party, as far as China was concerned, was founded in 1921. More than one national event has been shaped by decisions that have been made in Shanghai - 'a greenhouse for intellectual and political ferment.' The city now boasts more than 8,000 factories and production centres, which manufacture such varied things as electronic equipment, chemicals, instruments and meters, textiles, much machinery and even ships. It has been estimated that a third of all China's consumer goods are made in Shanghai.

*What about the housing
conditions in Shanghai?*

Check out for yourself just how much space is measured as four square meters and you will have an answer to your question. You see housing is so scarce that each of one million families (four or more people) lives in less than four square meters of space! Thousands of families, it has been reported, 'are crammed into homes where lofts serve as beds and three generations share the same room'.

Is there much joblessness in China?

This is the 'most dangerous issue,' as some observers maintain, that China must deal with as far as her youth are concerned. During the past several decades, a million or more of educated Shanghai youth were scattered into less urbanized areas in order 'to learn from the peasants.' Within the past year or so, more than 75% of these same young people have returned to Shanghai. Maybe 50% of them have found jobs, the remainder are 'waiting for assignment' - the Chinese polite way of referring to people who are out of work. Even though there is some 10% economic expansion yearly, there are still some one million unemployed men and women in Shanghai.

Is there much of a supply of consumer goods for the average Chinese?

We have been given to understand that shortages are common. But even if the supply were greater, the fact remains that most Chinese cannot afford what the shop windows may display. As an example, a pair of loafers or a blouse with colorful design could cost as much as half of a factory worker's pay for a month! Imagine working for a half year in order to buy a television set! Most television sets are bought by clubs or factories for communal viewing.

Did you see that poster on a Shanghai wall that stresses China's appeal to her people to stretch for the year 2000?

No, I wish I had. As I understand it is a dramatic appeal, picturing at least six different Chinese people. Each is astride a horse that is feverishly launching forward. The faces of the riders are determined. In the background is a clock. At the base of the poster is the inscription which reads: 'Take advantage of every minute and second to race to the year 2000'. The poster leaves little doubt as to China's aim to catch up, by the end of the century, with the rest of the world's technology.

Who was Jiang Qing?

I am tempted to ask, 'how did you know her name?' Most people in the West have never heard of her as such. She is Mao's widow - - one of the so-called "Gang of Four." She has been credited with master-minding the cultural revolution.

What was the 'cultural revolution'?

As I understand it - - it was that bold attempt (1966-1976) 'to wipe away all vestiges of traditional China and create a Communist nation in continual revolution.' It was a hectic, almost unbelievable period when the government hardly operated and schools and factories were shut down. Many people were brutally tortured or done away with.

Speaking of the "Gang of Four," whatever happened to them?

They were publicly tried. A 48 point indictment charged them with 'defaming, torturing, killing thousands who opposed them in an attempt to usurp power and state leadership.' Mao's widow, Jiang, was sentenced on January 25, 1981 to die. However, because there are still those who look back upon Mao with esteem and give him credit for much good, her sentence was suspended for two years. If she comes up with a 'good behavior' record, she could be sentenced to life imprisonment. I don't know the fate of the others.

Who is the most powerful leader in China today?

He is Deng Xiaoping who at age 76 is Vice Chairman of the Communist Party.

When did Mao die?

He died in September, 1976 at the age of 82 years.

How many people are there in China today and how many of them are Communists?

It is said that there are one billion Chinese. Of this total number there are 36 million who belong to the Communist Party.

Is there inflation in China?

Yes. China is one of the few Communist nations to admit having inflation. In 1980 the rate was a little less than 6%. There is reason to believe that in the urban areas it was somewhere between 2 and 3 times that much.

Does China, with its controlled economy, operate with a deficit?

Surprisingly, yea. It most certainly is not without its financial woes. We are told that since modernization began in 1978 there has been an annual deficit of some ten percent.

How much does an average worker in China earn?

A so-called middle-income worker in China earns about \$41. per month. According to 1979 figures, median income for American workers was some fifteen times as much - - \$608 per month.

How many miles of paved highways are there in China?

China, with much the same square mileage as the United States, has less than 8,000 miles of paved highways. In the United States we have something over 3,000,000 miles of highways.

Did you see any beggars in China?

I saw none to my knowledge.

*What is so-called 'wound
literature'?*

A certain number of Chinese writers and actors were among the first to deplore the cultural revolution as a human tragedy. The suffering of that painful decade (1966-1976) was so interpreted in their works.

Is there an energy shortage in China?

It has been reported that energy shortage has held factory operations to an estimated 70% of capacity.

*When they speak of China's
modernization program, what is
meant by that term?*

I think they refer to the present regime's objectives to advance and improve specifically in the areas of agriculture, industry, science and the armed forces.

What is night soil?

It is human fecal matter collected from houses without toilets. It is used as fertilizer. It has been reported that in Shanghai alone some 10,000 tons are collected every day.

*Do we have a trade agreement
with China?*

Yes. It was signed some two years ago - - in 1979.

What is schistosomiasis?

Ask any rice farmer. Until you go to China, let this answer suffice; it is dreaded by all who plant rice; it is a snail-borne disease which afflicts those who work in water for prolonged periods

*What three words by Chairman Mao
helped to capture the enthusiasm
of the masses?*

Here and there, even to this day, reproduced in his own hand-writing is Mao's famous three words: "Serve the People."

*Is it true that in modern China there
is a national requirement that big
cities must produce more than they
consume?*

Yes.

Are there very many automobiles in China?

I do not know what the per capita figure would be; there are very, very few by our standard - - and none, I believe, that are individually owned. Now bicycles - - that's something else. In Peking with its total population (men, women and children) of almost 8,000,000 there must be at least 3,000,000!!

What about the use of the color yellow?

It was at one time the color reserved for emperors.

Did you see a moon-gate?

Yes. Only a few, however, remain. They represent a distinctive feature of Chinese architecture - - signifying harmony and fulfillment. They were located within the court-yard area, used only by family and close friends. For women in that day they marked the limit beyond which they were not allowed to go.

Is it true that in the past-year houses in Peking had to be single story because nobody was allowed to overlook The Forbidden City?

Yes.

Is there freedom in China today?

I will answer you as I have been told - - as I have read: "For the Chinese today, freedom means the 'five guarantees' for everyone - - a job, a place to live, an education, health care, and a decent burial - - once the privilege of only 10% of the people. Freedom is defined further, in the provisions of the March 1978 Peoples Republic of China Constitution as: the right to own a home, to provide and claim an inheritance, to strike, to practice religion or atheism, and to register a complaint against an elected or appointed official without fear of reprisal."

What was it that you read as the statement of a former Anglican bishop, who once headed the Theological Seminary in Nanjing, which gave pause for thought?

The good bishop had once lived both in Switzerland and Canada. I presume you are referring to his contrast between daily life in China and the West when he observed: "In a capitalist country you raise the price of milk if there is scarcity, keeping the product available for those who

can pay. Here there is not yet enough milk for everyone; we get it two out of three days. But the price remains the same and it is distributed to babies, older people, and patients . . . "

*Is the English language taught
in China?*

It is the most popular second language today. In many schools it is taught from the 4th grade up. In Shanghai alone more than 300,000 people of all ages are now studying English.

*For those fortunate enough to have
money to deposit in the bank, what is
the current rate of interest?*

Approximately three per cent.

*What is the work schedule in
modern day China?*

For virtually everyone, factory workers, those in the service sectors, in white collar jobs, professionals, there is an eight hour day, six days a week.

*How many Chinese people are there
within the world's total population?*

It has been often said that China is the home of nearly one out of every four persons in the world.

*Why is China referred to as
multi-national?*

Because it is. It is a country comprising at least 55 major ethnic groups or nationalities.

*What about the extended family
in China?*

It is still very much in evidence. The three-generation family living under one roof is traditional. Siblings frequently vie with one another for the privilege of housing their parents.

Is there urban smog in China?

Very much. It is due primarily to the use of coal, domestic and industrial.

Is life in the countryside arduous?

Some 80% of the Chinese live in non-urban areas. Despite the fact that since 1949 conditions have improved signi-

significantly, yet peasant life remains arduous no matter how you look at it. During the planting and harvesting seasons they labor from dawn to dusk at back-breaking field work. At other times (so-called slack season) their time is occupied in construction and repair work, etc.

How is China's rural population organized?

A good question, indeed. As I understand it, there is a three-tier administrative system which is above the basic family unit.

The lowest level is the team: group or households for joint farm work on collectively-owned fields. The team owns the work tools, assigns tasks and distributes income. The middle rung is known as the brigade. It is comprised of a number of teams and generally administers light industries, clinics and primary schools.

The highest level constitutes the communes. There are about 50,000 of them. They are primarily responsible for large-scale rural construction projects such as irrigation works, forest and orchard management, the administration of hospitals and secondary schools. There are some 800,000 peasants.

What about China's pagodas?

They constitute a style of architecture which is distinctive to the East. In China they could be one of several things—towers of remembrance, pleasure houses, commemorative of some ritual or act of piety.

What is the only way to transport goods 'where roads are few and paths are narrow'?

By the shoulder pole, a symbol of life in the Chinese country-side in particular from time immemorial—'and only the man who carries it knows how heavy it is'!

What is the place of children in Chinese society today?

There is a definite attempt to limit the population. In Shanghai, as an example, every year more than 200,000 young people reach marriageable age. They are constantly being reminded of China's goal: 'one family, one child.' It has become government policy to provide certain benefits to those who commit themselves to one child. Those who have three or more children get a cut in pay. Abortion is practiced, and we've been told when a child is conceived out of wed-lock, abortion becomes the rule. Having said all this, we need to remember that tradi-

tionally a marriage in China without children is considered a sadness since who then is there to visit the family grave and revere the ancestors? We can say that we got the impression that children are happy, loved and cared for—and much of this is due to the extended family.

*Is it true that after rice and wheat,
fish farming is one of the most
important rural occupations?*

That's what we have been told.

*What was it that Winifred said
fascinated you as you looked from
your eighth floor room in
the Shanghai Mansions hotel?*

Several things, undoubtedly. For one—the same full moon shining over Silver Spring—and Shanghai! Then in the morning the barge traffic on the river—one after another in tow. But above all else—the men and women before breakfast who were enjoying their graceful and gentle form of exercise—a respected form of shadow boxing—known as Tai Ji Chuan. And would you believe it that the practice goes as far back to the Sung Dynasty (960-1126). There were at one time some 450 different movements which were grouped into 36 'patterns.' Once this practice was limited to the nobility, now the Peking government encourages it among the people all over China.

*Is it true that Shanghai was once
known for its drugs, gambling and
prostitution?*

Yes, but paradoxically enough, it should also be remembered as a great centre for launching Christian missionary work by the West.

*You were able to photograph
several Chinese whose facial
expressions moved you deeply.
Why were you so moved?*

Primarily because I could not be certain whether the person was illiterate or learned; whether he originally came from the country or was city-bred; whether he had status in other years, a survivor of some distinguished family or whether he was just another among a hundred thousand Chinese; whether he believed in God or not; albeit, I knew that chances were 99.99/100 per cent that I would never see him again—that I would think of him as one held in the hand of God whether with his belief or unbelief—that in common with all Chinese of his vintage

'he has seen wars, floods, famines, revolution and the rise and the fall of the great' . . . that he was still alive . . . that one day he would die . . . that perhaps in one way or another the world was a bit better (hopefully) because of him.

*Does living by China's rivers
exact a heavy price?*

In the course of the year there are weeks of hard labor, repairing banks, dams; building and cleaning irrigation ditches.

What are junks?

They are tall-masted square-rigged boats that catch the slightest breeze, slow-moving, laden with cargo.

*What is meant by the 'two-joins'
movement?*

It is a significant term. Simply it means that workers are given the opportunity to join those who make decisions at the management level, and by the same token supervisors and technicians are expected to spend some time at manual labor. There is a so-called attempt to combine theory with practice—to join those "who think" and those "who do."

*What about pornography and
advertisements that have so-called
'sex appeal'?*

We did not see any. We were told that such things are non-existent; not permitted in China.

*How do you think China
looks upon the West?*

A good question, really. In all likelihood visitors are answered in this manner: "We have learned many things from Capitalist and other socialist countries. The West has a superior transportation system, but we do not plan to make automobiles for individual ownership. Your factories produce more goods faster than we can, but they empty waste into the rivers; China law prohibits this, but we're still unable to control pollution due to industrial smoke. And when rural people migrate to urban centers for jobs—both in capitalist and socialist countries—the results are overcrowding, social alienation, and family dislocation. Therefore, we hope to reverse that trend; we want to decentralize industry so that provinces have a diversified economy and the load on our transport system is reduced. We seek to improve amenities in the country-

side to diminish the lure of the city. And, as you know, we engage in extensive family planning campaigns to limit the birth rate . . ." Does that somehow answer your question?

How many cars are there in China?

China with more than a billion people . . . China, a land where one out of every four persons in the world lives, has fewer than 500,000 automobiles in the entire country. None, as I understand it, is privately owned. They function as taxis and vehicles for officials and visiting dignitaries. They take a measure of pride in their limited edition of the "Red Flag" limousine—especially reserved for those whom they wish to honor.

Who succeeded Sun Yat-Sen?

After his death in 1925, Chiang Kai-shek unified the country under Nationalist rule, making Nanjing the capital in 1928. Eventually there was a split between the Nationalists and the Communists.

*How do you characterize
Communism in China?*

Perhaps you will settle for this answer—as far as the concept of politics in the Peoples Republic of China is concerned you essentially have the result of Mao Zedong's application of the ideas of Marxism and Leninism to China's specific and concrete situation or condition. It is Marxism in Chinese clothing!

*Are the Chinese people free to
stage marches and press grievances?*

Yes.

What is the CCP?

It is the leading political force in the Peoples Republic of China. It is the Chinese Communist Party which makes the overall policy decisions in China—social, political, economic.

*Is China's economy centrally
planned and controlled?*

Yes.

*When was China's so-called
'Great Leap Forward'?*

It was in 1958-1959. It was an attempt, bold at that, to make giant-like strides in industrial development. It was

not the total success that had been envisioned. The zeal for success resulted in severe strain on resources and economic imbalances followed. From 1959-1962 there were 'three bitter years' of an economic crisis brought on by several factors: economic dislocation from the Great Leap, bad harvests, the U.S.S.R.'s withdrawal of technical and economic aid.

Does China export any oil?

Yes, and some coal, too. Chiefly to Japan.

Is it true that China operates on a double standard of prices?

Yes. Foreigners pay more than the Chinese. In all honesty, the Chinese maintain that tourists should not be able to take advantage of China's low consumer prices, many of which are kept at a low level due to government control and subsidy.

Would you say that travel in China today is still a bargain?

At about \$65 per day for hotel, three meals and sight-seeing—the answer is yes—particularly when compared with costs in London, Hong Kong, Tokyo.

What about the climate in China?

Much like the United States, it is mostly temperate with four seasons. The spectrum is wide. In the north there are bitterly cold winters. In the south the summer months can be sultry and humid.

What about holidays in China?

There are only four official public holidays: January 1—New Year; May 1—Labor Day; October 1-2—Anniversary of the Founding of The Peoples Republic of China.

Is tap water potable in China?

No. Not even in the cities. Hotel rooms are generously supplied with boiled water in thermos bottles.

When it is twelve o'clock midnight in Silver Spring, what time is it in Peking?

It is twelve o'clock noon—the next day.

Did you eat with chop sticks?

No.

*What constitutes "good buys"
in China?*

The best could vary according to one's taste and pocket-book. Generally speaking a popular list could include: rugs, clay figurines, jewelry, cloisonne, lacquerware, ceramics, silk, embroidery, paper cuts, furs, suedes, scroll paintings, signature seals, stone carvings, sandalwood fans.

*Did you ever have the feeling that
you were being "watched"?*

Only once—and maybe that was the figment of my imagination.

*What about acupuncture and
moxibustion?*

While we saw both in a hospital, I can better answer you by what I wrote in my notes from what I read: "Acupuncture and moxibustion are both based on a complex theoretical system of meridians running over the surface of the body with hundreds of points along them related to specific internal organs or functions. Insertion of needles at these points (acupuncture) or burning an herb that is shaped into a cone and held over them (moxibustion) is used to treat a wide variety of medical problems."

*Do you believe in acupuncture and
moxibustion?*

Not really. But they do.

*What is the place of religion in
China today?*

Religion does not have a special place in China today. And a hard fact for most Westerners is the admission that China has never seen religion in the same light as adherents of the faith in Europe and the United States. Formal religion, as we know it, has never made much of an impact in China. Woven into the total fabric of life, C. K. Yang, well-known China sociologist, maintained (and with remarkable accuracy) that religion in China is diffused rather than institutionalized. Its signs are to be found in daily life rather than in church buildings or ritual. Chinese religion is notably of the down-to-earth variety. For centuries the Chinese people were hard-pressed to produce enough food just to stay alive. Consequently their religion became more practical than theoretical, and more ethical than theocentric. Drawing heavily from oriental philosophies or religions such as Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, the Chinese have dealt first with life in the

here-and-now and stressed the necessity for a good and beneficial relationship with their fellowman. They have identified the sacred as the secular, so to speak.

With the Communist victory by the Communists in 1949, Mao Zedong declared that the Chinese people 'had finally stood up.' What inference does this have for Christianity?

Naturally he was referring to China's shedding the heavy weight of 150 years of foreign domination, exploitation—and one could add—of a social order that had become self-destructive. To some limited degree, the churches did not remain immune from so-called foreign domination. The Christian Church in China also was 'standing up' against the powerful influence of the West and of missionaries no matter how well-intentioned. Eventually there developed among Protestants the "Three-Self Patriotic Movement" as they definitely strove to become self-supporting, self-propagating and self-governing. Whether we of the West like it or not, the fact cannot be ignored that within the Marxist revolution, there is a very serious effort being made by Chinese Christians in this way to fully identify with the aims of their fellowmen. Roman Catholics have responded similarly as they formed the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, separated as it is from the Vatican.

What is the essence of religion in China today?

"Serve the people" was Mao's famous slogan. In her gigantic effort to provide the needy with food, clothing, shelter, medicines, education—China sees religion as a concern for social justice more so than for personal piety. Quoting Gandhi who once said of India, 'For the hungry, God comes in the form of bread,' an astute observer went on to conclude that 'religion in China, perhaps more so than elsewhere, exists as the realm of human values set amidst the urgent needs of the people.'

Are churches open for worship today?

Now that the Cultural Revolution is being discredited and since the policies of the Gang of Four are no longer dominant, religious freedom is again possible in China. We worshipped with a congregation of the Chinese National Christian Council in Nanjing on Sunday, October 18—a church filled to capacity—some 600-700 being present with a congregation of similar size the night before. An increasing number of people are freely participating in public worship as well as some 40,000 home groups throughout the land.

Are there denominations as such among Protestants today?

No. The previously different denominations are now knit together as the Chinese National Christian Council—and they much prefer it that way.

What would you say is the religious population of China's one billion people?

One generally regarded trust-worthy report has it that the estimates could be as follows: 100 million Buddhists, 10 million Muslims, 3 million Roman Catholics and 700,000 Protestants (by far the greater part meeting in home groups).

Is there an interest in Christianity among college-age students?

In the one personal encounter that I had, I would be led to believe that there is. According to Dr. J. R. LeMasters (Baylor University professor of American Studies), who was one of the first Americans invited by the Peoples Republic of China to teach at the Beijing Foreign Language Institute, there is "tremendous interest in Christianity among college-age students in the Peoples Republic of China."

Does the government in the Peoples Republic of China intervene directly in religious worship?

According to my understanding, it does not interfere directly—but one must hasten to add it is the government which controls the number of churches permitted—and pays all the church workers!

Where is Mao Zedong buried?

It has been said that few men in world history have had the impact that he made. Upon the first anniversary of his death, a 100-ft. high building as a memorial to him was officially opened in Tien An Men Square, the largest public square in the world. It was in that square that more than a million people had gathered at the time of his death a year earlier. It was a most natural and proper thing that he should be buried there—in the heart of Peking—close to the people he served.

*Are the basic tenets of Marxism
being questioned in China today?*

In certain quarters in China there are those who maintain that Marxism is 'a dated philosophy that has little contemporary value.' How significant this is, I do not know. The "Peoples Daily," the official organ, I have read somewhere has run a series of articles defending Marxism, 'attempting to disclaim the idea, which is obviously spreading, that the application of Marxism led to the widespread failures of the Mao era.' Also I have read that one document, published by the Central Committee in July, 1981, indicated that "Today there is trend in society that doubts and rejects Marxism and the thoughts of Mao. There are people who believe that they are not worth a farthing—they propose other doctrines to take its place." China's present day leader, Deng Xiaoping, is a pragmatist. He has a tough assignment as he endeavors 'to fly the flag of communism and at the same time adopt economic policies that would cause Marx to turn over in his grave.' Astute observers conclude that whatever progress he may make will lead away from Marxism rather than solidify it—a genuine dilemma indeed.

How ancient is Chinese culture?

For those of us acquainted with Biblical history, the answer comes in this manner: 'unrecorded history attested by archaeology easily predates Abraham.' The writer of Asia Focus in his most recent edition of Asian Report puts it this way for us: 'The earliest extant writings, inscribed in primitive characters on daggers, sacrificial vessels and pieces of jade, date from the first truly historical period, the Shang Dynasty (1523-1028 B.C.). Around the time when the Judges were ruling Israel, the Chinese had already developed an advanced bronze refining process and a calendar system of 10-day 'weeks' and 60-day cycles that has survived down into this century. By the time Solomon's Temple had been completed, complex moral strictures were already becoming a part of Chinese society. Even while Rome was still struggling for self-identity, China became for the first time a unified empire, with all writing standardized—out of China came the water-powered mill that was later to industrialize Western civilization . . ."

*While you were in Peking, there was
a Standard-Sized Clothing Fair.
What can you say about it?*

While we did not get to go there, I can report that there is a definite interest in China's urban areas in light-colored, ready-to-wear clothing as over against the traditional dark grey or blue—usually tailor-made, costly

and time consuming. For more than three weeks after the Fair opened in Peking, people were lined up for two kilometers every day awaiting a turn to enter. Interestingly enough the Fair is sponsored by China's Ministry of Light Industry as part of an effort to promote standardized garment sizes adopted by the National Standardization Bureau. A system for unified sizes will be introduced nation-wide in January. It will have to be revised every three to five years to keep up with changes in the human body. As I understand it, China spent three years researching clothing sizes in 20 provinces. Mathematicians helped analyze the data and work out a system of standard sizes which should enable 90% of the people to buy suitable ready-made clothes.

Did the Chinese discover America?

Don't smile, friend. Your question is not without merit. An item across the bottom of the front page of the China Daily (Thursday, October 15, 1981 - published in Peking) date-line San Diego, California, October 14 began "The Chinese may have sailed to California 2,000 years before Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492, two scientists say. After studying 11 large stones found off southern California six years ago, Professor James R. Moriarity III and Larry J. Pierson said the rocks 'certainly' came off a Chinese ship that may have wrecked more than 500 years ago. Pierson maintains it could even be 2500 years or longer. Dr. Fang Zong-Fu of Peking's Institute For Water Transport agrees with their findings."

Dr. Sun Yat-Sen is considered the Father of the 1911 Revolution. Where was he when he got the news of the uprising that triggered the successful overthrow of the monarchy?

He was living in exile in Denver, Colorado. He was unanimously chosen to head the new republic.

Does China have an interest in scientific farming?

Very much so. As an example they have developed a new variety of tomato which has a short growing period and yields more than 75 tons per hectare.

How open are the Chinese Communists in their assessment of 32 years of New China?

A question indeed that needs to be asked. For at least three or four months (since July) people throughout China have been studying a key Party document with the lengthy

title "Resolution on Certain Questions in The History of Our Party Since the Founding of the Peoples Republic of China." It needs to be said that the nature of the Resolution makes 'its publication a major event in China's political life, an event that will help determine the future of one billion people.' Significantly enough, it recognizes both the strong points and the weak points in Mao Zedong. He is most certainly faulted for his poor judgment in his last years. Evidently those who study the Resolution have generally concluded that "China after Mao Zedong will be a socialist country based on Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong thought. Far from forgetting Comrade Mao Zedong, the Chinese Party and people will strive to carry out tasks he proposed but did not put into practice, to rectify the mistakes of his last years, and to accomplish things he did not accomplish."

Is it true that China has the world's worst traffic accident record?

According to an AP release out of Peking, quoted in the October 25, 1981 edition of the Hong Kong Standard, China has more deaths per miles driven than any other country in the world. (India rated second in such category). It is not because traffic moves at a rapid rate. Peking, as an example, is rated low in the speed of its traffic flow because of the 'chaotic crossings by pedestrians and cyclists, the large number of narrow alleys and random stopping and parking by cars and trucks.'

Is China energy saving conscious?

Yes. In fact November is set aside specifically as "Energy Saving Month." This is being done annually since 1979. During the month propaganda in this regard is stepped up, there are scheduled inspections of energy savings methods, meetings are held to share experiences and new energy conservation techniques are popularized.

What about the Bible in China today?

China takes a very dim view regarding the illegal smuggling of Bibles into her country. However, it has been reported that last year she allowed a printing of 50,000 Chinese New Testaments, and in the eyes of some the Bible "has become the most sought-after book in the country."

How has China responded to Christian mission?

Dr. Samuel Hugh Moffett, professor of Ecumenism and Mission at Princeton Theological Seminary, has written: "China has been the least responsive to the Christian

mission. After 1,300 years of Christian effort, China must still be classified, along with Islam in Western Asia and Hindu India in South Asia, as one of the world's three largest blocks of humanity most impermeable to Christian mission."

Are there more Christians in China today than before?

Before when? If you mean since the Communist take over in 1949, the answer (surprisingly enough) is yes. Despite the fact that the Red Guards of the radical left ran wild during the cultural revolution (1966-1969 in particular), shutting down all churches - - for a time there was not one organized church open and intact - - it is said that there are more Christians in China today than 32 years ago.

How do you account for this?

There is no question but what the cultural revolution went too far. Reaction began even before Mao's death. From 1970 on churches began to reopen slowly. The pace picked up after 1976. Since early 1980, the "house church movement" has startled even the most optimistic with its emerging strength. Estimates of the number of Chinese Christians have escalated every month by leaps and bounds. Some reports have over 40,000 "house churches" in China today. It will be a long time, it is safer to assume, until reliable figures are forthcoming.

Is it true that the revolution changed the Church almost beyond recognition?

Let me give you Dr. Moffat's appraisal: "The revolution changed the church almost beyond recognition. It did not allow religion; the constitution guaranteed individual freedom of belief. But it did not approve of religion and permitted only limited freedom of religious organization under the direction of the government's Religious Affairs Bureau. Only two approved national Christian bodies survived, one for Protestants, the Three-Self Movement ('self-government, self-support, and self-propagation'), and one for Catholics, The Catholic Patriotic Society."

Are churches in China reopening today?

I have read, and I believe the report, that last year 30 churches were re-opened, a few months later 80; last spring, 100. More are continuing to open. There are, it is said, five large churches again open in Shanghai, and it is also said that none has a Sunday attendance of less than two thousand. We worshipped with a congregation in

Nanjing where the building was filled to capacity on Sunday, October 18, 1981 . . . with a similar situation the day before.

What about the training of ministers?

I can only say that in Nanjing a few months ago when the theological seminary was allowed to re-open as part of Nanjing University some 47 entered the first class. But mark you, 300 had applied for admission!

What is the Christian Council of China?

As I understand it, back in December 1980 it was organized as a kind of sister structure to the Three-Self Movement, oriented more to the Christian community than to the government.

What will the Chinese Christian Council do?

Here again - - as I understand it - - it will encourage people to become pastors and teachers; publish and distribute Bibles, strengthen communication between churches, believers, house groups.

Is the Chinese Christian Council government-approved?

Yes; an encouraging sign.

How should Western Christians view these changes in China today as far as the Church is concerned?

Difficult as it is for us who are prone to become judgmental and to take impulsive unilateral action, we must respond with true sensitivity. We have no right to attempt to impose upon the Chinese a particular pattern of our so-called "brand" of Christianity.

What would you say could be considered the greatest single change that has taken place in China's Christianity in the past 10 difficult years?

The responsibility for witnessing has shifted from the clergy to the laity - - who are proving themselves equal to the challenge!

*Do Catholics in China maintain a
relationship with the Vatican?*

Catholics in the People's Republic of China continue to re-assert their independence from Rome. Recently they consecrated five bishops of their own choosing - - an event, lasting 8 hours, that was filmed by Chinese television as it occurred in the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Beijing.

*Your friend, Dr. David L. Vikner,
executive director of the L.C.A.
Division for World Mission and
Ecumenism, visited China in the last
year or so. What can you tell us of
his impressions?*

It is well that you should ask, and his views are to be highly regarded. He is the son of Lutheran missionaries who served in China, as did he. He has spoken to us here in Saint Luke on at least one occasion. WORLD ENCOUNTER, published by the DWME, an excellent journal which I most heartily commend to you, carried an article by Dr. Vikner in the Fall, 1981 issue - - an issue which is totally dedicated to China and should become a handbook for all of us. Let me quote here his main points:

- (1) The Christian community in China - at least the Protestant community - is larger today than it was before the People's Republic was proclaimed in 1949.
- (2) The old denominations brought to China by the Western missionaries have disappeared.
- (3) The old-style missionaries also are permanently gone, as far as China is concerned.
- (4) The new church is more deeply rooted in the soil of China.
- (5) The church does not have to dedicate so much of its material and human resources to heavily institutional health, education and welfare programs as in the past.
- (6) The Chinese Church will have to rediscover its place in the world Christian community.
- (7) The cleavage between 'fundamentalists' and 'modernists' so deep and widespread in China during the decades before 1949, seems to have largely healed.

*How do the Chinese feel about
smuggling Bibles into China?*

The representatives of The China Christian Council strongly resent it. "Marxism And The China Study Information Letters," which comes from Geneva, Switzerland, where our friend Arne Sovik works diligently, deals with this subject in the same issue of *The World Encounter* to which I have just referred. It should be compulsory reading.

*Would you want to return to
China for another visit?*

If it were possible, and a purpose could be served. Yes!